

Facts & Information

August 1998

Slamming Prevention

Slamming occurs when a customer's telephone service, either local or long-distance, is switched to another company without the customer's consent. This practice is illegal but not uncommon.

When Customers Wish to Change Companies

Consumers may change telephone companies by calling the company of their choice and asking for a change; or by agreeing to switch during a telemarketing call. The new company is required to verify the switch in any one of the following ways:

1. Obtain written consent from the customer;
2. Have the customer call back and enter information into an automated database;
3. Have an independent third party call to verify the change;

State Enforcement

The UTC investigates slamming violations when they affect a customer's telephone provider for local and in-state long distance services. If found in violation of state rules, companies are required to issue a full refund of all charges made as a result of the violation.

If you have been slammed, call the company that made the switch and tell them to switch you back to your preferred provider. If the company is unresponsive, file a complaint with the UTC by calling 1-800-562-6150; by visiting the web site at www.wutc.wa.gov/; or by sending a letter to P.O. Box 47250, Olympia, WA 98504-7250.



P.O. Box 47250
1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

Local: (360)664-1160
Toll Free: 800-562-6150
TTY: (360)586-8203

Web site: www.wutc.wa.gov
Email: info@wutc.wa.gov

All UTC publications are
available in alternate formats.
Call (360)664-1133.

Federal Enforcement

A customer may file a slamming complaint with the Federal Communications Commission if it involved interstate long-distance service by sending a letter to the FCC Common Carrier Bureau Enforcement Division, Informal Complaints and Public Inquiries Branch, at Mail Stop Code 1600A2, 2025 "M" Street, Washington, DC 20554 or by calling the FCC, toll-free, at 1-888-225-5322.

Complaint letters to the Federal Communications Commission should include:

1. Your name and address, the telephone number that was slammed and a telephone number where you can be reached during the business day.
2. Names of the your local and long-distance telephone companies and the long-distance company which was responsible for the slamming.
3. Names and telephone numbers of the telephone company employees you spoke with in an effort to resolve the complaint and the dates those conversations took place.
4. Any other information that would help in handling the complaint.
5. Copies of any documents you have received, such as a bill for changing to the unauthorized company.

Preventing Slamming

To help prevent slamming, you can request the local telephone company for “PIC protection”. PIC protection ensures your long-distance company is not changed without your directly expressed consent. Call your local telephone company to request PIC protection.

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